Rise and Decline of Muslim Ummah

"My people will undergo and experience all those conditions which were suffered by Bani Israel." [*Tirmidhi*]

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RISE AND DECLINE OF THE MUSLIM UMMAH

With a comparison to Jewish history and a brief survey of the present efforts towards the resurgence of Islam

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English Translation
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عَنْ عَبْدُ اللّٰهِ بِنْ عَمْرُوْ بِنُ الْعَاصِ رضي الله عنه

قَالَ قَالَ رَسُوْلُ اللّٰهِ صَلَى اللّٰهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ

لَيَأتِيَنَّ عَلٰے اُمَّتِیْ

كَمَا اَتٰى عَلٰے بَنِیْ اِسْرَائِيْلَ

حَذْوَالنَّعْلِ بِالنَّعْلِ.....

(رواہ ترمذی، عن عبد اللہ ابن عمرو رضي الله عنه)

'Abdullah bin 'Amar al-'Aas reported Allah's Messenger, Muhammad (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him), as saying:

"My people (Ummah) will undergo and experience all those conditions which were suffered by the Children of Israel in a Manner of resemblance in which a shoe of a pair resembles the other shoe."

(Tirmidhi)

بِسۡمِ اللّٰہِ الرَّحۡمٰنِ الرَّحِیۡمِ

وَقَضَیۡنَاۤ اِلٰی بَنِیۡۤ اِسۡرَآءِیۡلَ فِی الۡکِتٰبِ لَتُفۡسِدُنَّ فِی الۡاَرۡضِ
مَرَّتَیۡنِ وَ لَتَعۡلُنَّ عُلُوًّا کَبِیۡرًا ④ فَاِذَا جَآءَ وَعۡدُ اُوۡلٰىہُمَا بَعَثۡنَا
عَلَیۡکُمۡ عِبَادًا لَّنَاۤ اُولِیۡ بَاۡسٍ شَدِیۡدٍ فَجَاسُوۡا خِلٰلَ الدِّیَارِ ط
وَکَانَ وَعۡدًا مَّفۡعُوۡلًا ⑤ ثُمَّ رَدَدۡنَا لَکُمُ الۡکَرَّۃَ عَلَیۡہِمۡ وَاَمۡدَدۡ
نٰکُمۡ بِاَمۡوَالٍ وَّ بَنِیۡنَ وَ جَعَلۡنٰکُمۡ اَکۡثَرَ نَفِیۡرًا ⑥ اِنۡ اَحۡسَنۡتُمۡ
اَحۡسَنۡتُمۡ لِاَنۡفُسِکُمۡ قف وَاِنۡ اَسَاۡتُمۡ فَلَہَا ط فَاِذَا جَآءَ
وَعۡدُ الۡاٰخِرَۃِ لِیَسُوۡٓءٗا وُجُوۡہَکُمۡ وَ لِیَدۡخُلُوا الۡمَسۡجِدَ کَمَا
دَخَلُوۡہُ اَوَّلَ مَرَّۃٍ وَّ لِیُتَبِّرُوۡا مَا عَلَوۡا تَتۡبِیۡرًا ⑦ عَسٰی رَبُّکُمۡ اَنۡ
یَّرۡحَمَکُمۡ ج وَاِنۡ عُدۡتُّمۡ عُدۡنَا م وَجَعَلۡنَا جَہَنَّمَ لِلۡکٰفِرِیۡنَ
حَصِیۡرًا ⑧ اِنَّ ہٰذَا الۡقُرۡاٰنَ یَہۡدِیۡ لِلَّتِیۡ ہِیَ اَقۡوَمُ وَ یُبَشِّرُ
الۡمُؤۡمِنِیۡنَ الَّذِیۡنَ یَعۡمَلُوۡنَ الصّٰلِحٰتِ اَنَّ لَہُمۡ اَجۡرًا کَبِیۡرًا ⑨
وَّاَنَّ الَّذِیۡنَ لَا یُؤۡمِنُوۡنَ بِالۡاٰخِرَۃِ اَعۡتَدۡنَا لَہُمۡ عَذَابًا اَلِیۡمًا ⑩

(سورہ بنی اسرائیل ۱۷: ۴ ـ ۱۰)

In the name of Allah, Most Gracious, Most Merciful

And We gave (clear) warning to the Children of Israel in the Book that twice would they do mischief on the earth and be elated with mighty arrogance (and twice would they be punished)!

When the first of the warnings came to pass We sent against you Our servants given to terrible warfare: They entered the very inmost parts of your homes; and it was a warning (completely) fulfilled.

Then did We grant you the Return as against them: We gave you increase in resources and sons and made you the more numerous in manpower.

If ye did well ye did well for yourselves; if ye did evil (ye did it) against yourselves; so when the second of the warnings came to pass (We permitted your enemies) to disfigure your faces and to enter your Temple as they had entered if before and to visit with destruction all that fell into their power.

It may be that your Lord may (yet) show Mercy unto you; but if ye revert (to your sins) We shall revert (to Our punishments): and We have made Hell a prison for those who reject (all Faith).

Verily this Qur'an doth guide to that which is most right (or stable) and giveth the glad tidings to the Believers who work deeds of righteousness that they shall have a magnificent reward;

And to those who believe not in the Hereafter (it announceth) that We have prepared for them a Penalty grievous (indeed).

(AL-QUR'AN: 17:4-10)

INTRODUCTION

The substance of the present tract draws mainly from a long article published by Dr. Israr Ahmed under the same title in the October/November 1974 issue of 'Meesaq' magazine. It was later included in a booklet entitled 'Sar-Afgandem' which comprises, among other things, the contents of a marathon speech delivered at the end of 21-days long Qur'anic study camp held at Lahore in September 1974, in which Dr. Israr Ahmed publicly announced the formation of 'Tanzeem-e-Islami' - a well-disciplined religious group to work for the propagation and revival of Islam in its totality.

Histories of the Jews and the Muslims, being typically woven around divine revelation, provide a scholar ground for a thoughtful and perceptive comparative study of them. Though in the present day political climate, Jews and Muslims form two totally divergent people, yet striking similarities in their temporal histories are found and pointed out. In particular there is a strong parallelism regarding the two phases of rise and decline experienced by the two religious fraternities during the long course of their histories thus proving literally a tradition of the Holy Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) on this subject reproduced elsewhere in this monograph.

The view of history in the Muslim mind is, and should be, a prophetic one. In the Qur'an over and over again the historic sequence is repeated - a warning, followed by either repentance or destruction, as God sends His messenger to one nation after another. The Qur'an provides a basis for the moral interpretation of history 'The course of history is a moral agency through which the

morally superior elements rise to the top, while those who are morally inferior sink to the bottom'. That virtuous living, which is the outcome of a healthy religious faith, must inevitably lead to success[1]. This interpretation is deeper and broader than that of Karl Max because it covers both the moral and material aspects, while that of Marx concentrates entirely on the material aspect, being greatly influenced by the materialistic evolutionary philosophies of his time. Religion is not opium for the people. The impulse towards social emancipation is surely found in Islam. It always aimed at a society where equality, justice and prosperity would prevail. Islam teaches that God is concerned not only with moral and spiritual life of man but also with total social emancipation and betterment of economic conditions. The Holy Prophet (peace be upon him) left for us not only a theory that is preached, but concrete experience and historical facts.

Dr. Israr Ahmed's analysis presented here avoids the so-called cool and uncommitted academicism typical of modern writers of Islamic themes. It cannot be squared with an anti-activist or 'spectator' view of Islam and Islamic literature that aims merely at an enlargement of the understanding. Indeed here it becomes an essentially practical subject of vital importance: it seeks to get Muslims to do things. He firmly believes that if history is read backwards, it is lived forwards. Dr. Israr Ahmed has a clear and well-defined view of the 'future imperative' regarding the revival and resurgence of Islam. Moreover, he himself sounds an optimistic note in the beginning of this monograph about a world embracing movement towards Islamic renaissance. Islam's inner capacity for renewal has more than once surprised both friends and foes. It has at various times raised up reformers to rekindle the light of faith when it had grown dim. It has better chance than any other faith or ideology of holding and

extending its power over the hearts and wills of men, as there is a fresh search for reality, especially among the young and the highly educated.

One thing that becomes clear from a perusal of this tract is that the warp and wool of the author's entire thinking is made up with Qur'anic concepts. The very categories of his thinking are those of the Holy Qur'an and the prophetic traditions. He does not quote from the Holy Book just to prove his point or buttress his argument. The Qur'an, for him, is meant to inspire and we must look to it for the stimulus to spiritual experience and historical understanding. It is only through practice and experience and not through clever interpretation that we can give it genuine significance. The spontaneity and facility with which he quotes the Qur'anic verses amply shows that the teachings of the Divine Book permeate his thinking and imagination thoroughly.

Dr. Sanaullah Ansari took great pains to translate this monograph from Urdu into English. Later, a number of amendments in linguistic style and syntax were made at various places in the first draft. We do hope that he would find it much improved in the present form. The Anjuman Khuddam-ul-Qur'an is highly indebted to him for this valuable help.

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"In the Name of Allah, Most Gracious, Most Merciful".

The Two Periods of the Rise and Decline of the Muslim Ummah

The Twentieth century of the Christian era, according to our analysis, presents a decisive turning point in the history of the Muslim Ummah (community). At the end of the first quarter of the century the state of the Muslim world had taken a definite turn, and there were some signs of resuscitation in the moribund body of the Muslim Ummah.

If we look at it closely, the middle half of this century presents an astounding picture. On one hand, the process of decline and deterioration reached its lowest ebb in the events of 1967 and 1971. On the other hand, there was also a widespread movement towards revival and the beginning of a process of renewal. It commenced during the years 1920-1925. For the past fifty years these concurrent trends of degeneration and revival continued side by side almost in the manner depicted in the Qur'an.

مَرَجَ الْبَحْرَيْنِ يَلْتَقِيٰنِ ○ بَيْنَهُمَا بَرْزَخٌ لَّا يَبْغِيٰنِ ○

(الرحمان ٥٥:١٩ـ٢٠)

"He has let free the two bodies of flowing water, meeting together. Between them is a barrier which they do not transgress".

(Al-Qur'an 55 : 19-20)

In order to elaborate this general view, we will first present a chronological sketch of the rise and decline of the Muslim Ummah. In fact, an understanding of our present situation demands that the past glory and grandeur of the Muslim Ummah should be realised by young Muslims. They should know that there was a time when the armies of the Arabs starting from Gibraltar had reached north-east into the heart of France. At another time the Turkish armies, after trampling all of Eastern Europe, were knocking at the gates of Vienna. Perhaps in this way we can recreate in the hearts of our young men a desire to revive the past majesty and glory of the Muslim civilisation.

It should also become clear from this that the decline of this superb culture was due to the justice of Almighty Allah (SWT), which is above all human considerations, as His laws are abiding and immutable. The way He dealt with the previous community of faith in His revelation i.e., the Jews - was repeated in His dealings with us. Our history and their history are to a remarkable extent analogous. Two periods of severe chastisement were borne by the Jews, and we have also passed through two periods of chastisement. Although, because of the vastness of the Ummah of Muhammad (SAW) our periods of deterioration and degradation were much longer than those of the Jews. During the period of Jewish control, Jerusalem was devastated twice, and during the period of our control the sanctity of al-Aqsa Mosque was also violated twice.

After this we will have a brief survey of the present general current of revival in order to widen the intellectual horizon of the reader so that he may look at the various efforts of Islamic revival in the right perspective. In addition to that, it would also clarify what kind of humble service we are trying to perform in the midst of this

pervasive process of revival and the sector in which we are trying to work, so that according to the Qur'anic verse:

لِّيَهْلِكَ مَنْ هَلَكَ عَنْ بَيِّنَةٍ وَّيَحْيٰى مَنْ حَيَّ عَنْ بَيِّنَةٍ ط

(الانفال ٨:٤٢)

> "He who perished might perish having a clear proof, and he who survived might survive having a clear proof". (Al-Qur'an 8 : 42)

He who wishes to co-operate with us should have sufficient ground to do so with full potentialities of his heart and soul and without reservations; and he who wants to criticise us, should fulfil this obligation after complete understanding of our standpoint.

In this connection with the historical sketch of the rise and fall of the Muslim Ummah, it should be understood that the Ummah of the Prophet Muhammad (SAW) has two components. The first consists of those among the descendants of Ismail (AS) -- referred to in the Qur'an as 'ummiyeen' i.e., the unlettered people -- who had not received a previous revelation from Allah (SWT). These Arabs constitute the nucleus of the Ummah. The other component, 'akhareen' includes all other people, whether Kurds, Turks, Persians, Afghans, Indians, Mughals, Abyssinians, Berbers or any other. They may live as far as Malaysia and Indonesia in the east and as far as Morocco and Mauritania in the West.

Secondly, the Islamic world can be divided in three sections geographically. If we focus our gaze on the Islamic part of the globe, it would look like an eagle that is flying with its two wings completely outstretched. The first geographical section is in the centre, the heart of Muslim territory. The two others form wings on either side. The Arabian Peninsula, Iraq, Palestine, Syria and Asia Minor can be regarded as the main body of the

Islamic world, analogous to the body of the eagle. Asia Minor is its head and beak. The southern part of the peninsula is its tail with wings stretched out. Its right wing starts from Iran and Turkey, includes Afghanistan and Indo-Pak sub-continent, and extends up to Malaysia and Indonesia. Its left wing encompasses the whole of Northern Africa and had reached into Spain and France.

Now let us look at the historical sketch. The history of the Muslim Ummah starts from the seventh century of the Christian era as the Prophet Muhammad (SAW) was born in 571 A.D. He started his mission in 610 A.D. and the most correct estimates state that, after having brought about a complete Islamic revolution throughout the Arabian peninsula, he returned to his Creator in the year 632 A.D. (May the peace, blessings and grace of Allah (SWT) be showered upon him). During the reign of the first three caliphs, Abu Bakr, Umer and Usman (RAA) who were all immediate disciples of Muhammad (SAW), the 'unlettered' descendants of Ismail (the Arabs) sallied forth like a flood from the Arabian peninsula, with the Qur'an in one hand and a sword in the other. In less than a quarter of a century they planted the flag of Islam not only in Iran, Iraq, Syria, Palestine and Egypt, but also upon a considerable portion of North Africa. During the Caliphate of Ali (RAA) this expansion ceased temporarily, but with the beginning of the Umayyad era it started again. Within a short span of time, new lands were conquered extending in the East through Turkistan and Afghanistan up to Sindh, and in the West extending through the entire area of North Africa and a vast area of Western Europe including Spain. This was the time when Arab armies, advancing from Spain, had reached the heart of France. Muslim political domination was at its zenith in the eighth, nine and tenth centuries of the Christian era. The dynasties of Umayyads and Abbasids -- two important descendant clans of 'ummiyeen' Arabs -- upheld the banner of the

Islamic world[2]. Their civilization and culture, their religion, their arts and sciences and their supremacy continued to exercise its hold on the greater portion of the civilized world. But the more their worldly power and majesty grew, the more their religious sentiments and enthusiasm for their faith declined. In this way this majestic power structure rotted from inside. The signs of internal weakness took some time to become evident, but by the tenth century it had become quite clear that the Arabs had touched utter decadence and senility. In the eleventh century the decline and deterioration of the unlettered people (the Arabs) had reached to its last limit, and consequently a power vacuum was created in the heart of the Islamic world.

As a result of this power vacuum, tribes arose from the north-eastern borders of the Muslim world, and penetrated to the centre of the Muslim lands. Fortunately, they had already embraced Islamic faith. These were the Kurds and the Seljuk Turks. In the eleventh century they strengthened their hold in Syria, Palestine and Egypt. In this way, a fresh force was supplied for the safety and protection of the centre of the Islamic world.[3]

During the twelfth and thirteenth centuries the first of the chastisement with which Allah (SWT) had threatened the Jews and which He meted out to them overtook the Muslim Ummah. The following Divine warning was fulfilled exactly:

بَعَثْنَا عَلَيْكُمْ عِبَادًا لَّنَآ اُولِىْ بَاْسٍ شَدِيْدٍ فَجَاسُوْا خِلٰلَ الدِّيَارِ ط

(بنی اسرائیل ۱۷:۵)

"We sent against you our servants, given to terrible warfare. They entered the very inmost parts of your homes and towns."

(Al-Qur'an 17 : 5)

In this connection, large armies of Crusaders swarmed from the West and in 1099, not only the sanctity of Al-Aqsa Mosque was defiled, there was also a massacre in Jerusalem on such a vast scale that even the Western historians feel guilty while mentioning it in their accounts. Jerusalem remained in the possession of the Crusaders for eighty-eight years. This was so because the Abbasid Caliphate was passing through the Pangs of death, and there was no energy left in the descendants of the originally indomitable Arabs. Finally, the fiery and fresh blood of 'akhareen' i.e., non-Arab Muslim people under the leadership of the great and famous warrior Salahuddin Ayyubi liberated Jerusalem from the occupation of the Crusaders in 1187 A.D. and thus turned the tide of the war between Muslims and the invaders.

Then from the East came the great stormy hordes of Tartars, who first ravaged Afghanistan and Iran, and in 1258 A.D. devastated Baghdad completely. Millions of Muslims were savagely murdered. The streets of Baghdad turned into pools of blood and the famous city of 'A thousand and one nights' was literally razed to the ground. This was repetition of exactly the same situation that had occurred two thousand years before on the destruction of Solomon's Temple by the invasion of Nebuchadnezzar. Consequently with the fall of Malik Mu'tasim, the Muslim Caliph, the flickering lamp of Abbasid Caliphate was completely extinguished. Thus not only the first threat of Divine chastisement upon the Muslim Ummah was fulfilled but also as far as the Arabs were concerned at least the following warning was also fulfilled:

وَاِنۡ تَتَوَلَّوۡا يَسۡتَبۡدِلۡ قَوۡمًا غَيۡرَكُمۡ ثُمَّ لَا يَكُوۡنُوۡۤا اَمۡثَالَكُمۡ O

(محمد٤٧:٣٨)

"And if ye turn away, He will substitute in your place another people, then they would not be like you". (Al-Qur'an 47 : 38)

They were dismissed from the leadership and authority they had held over the Islamic world. Two years later, in 1260 A.D. the advance of the Tartars was checked by the non-Arabs which at least saved the Western wing of the Islamic world from further destruction.

During the twelfth and thirteenth centuries the heart of the Islamic world presented a picture similar to the one which had induced the Prophet Uzair (AS), also known as Ezira or Esdras, to utter these words involuntarily on seeing Jerusalem in ruins after the Captivity:

أَنّٰى يُحْيِ هٰذِهِ اللّٰهُ بَعْدَ مَوْتِهَا ج (البقرہ ۲:۲۵۹)

"How shall Allah bring it (ever) to life after its death?" (Al-Qur'an 2 : 259)

Then Allah's grace was shown to the Muslim Ummah as it was to the Jews. Allah (SWT) says in the Holy Qur'an:

ثُمَّ رَدَدْنَا لَكُمُ الْكَرَّةَ عَلَيْهِمْ وَأَمْدَدْنٰكُمْ بِأَمْوَالٍ وَّ بَنِيْنَ
وَجَعَلْنٰكُمْ أَكْثَرَ نَفِيْرًا ○ (بنی اسرائیل ۱۷:۶)

"Then We established you once again against them, and We aided you with wealth and children, and We multiplied you in manpower".

(Al-Qur'an 17 : 6)

There is, however, a difference here. The previous Muslim Ummah, that is the Jews, involved only one race. Hence their renaissance was obliviously restricted to that race. But there was no such restriction in the case of the Ummah of the Prophet Muhammad (SAW). Here the task

of renewal and renaissance was not performed by the original Arabs, but by other people of the Islamic world. Most of the descendants of those Tartars who were the cause of dreadful destruction of the Islamic world, had converted to Islam. Two other barbaric tribes like them were also fortunate enough to accept the Islamic faith. One of these tribes, the Taimuri Turks, laid the foundations of a splendid Muslim rule in India, and thereby enlarged the right wing of Islamic world. A second tribe, the Usmanian Turks, at first established themselves firmly in Asia Minor, then gradually raised the magnificent edifice of the Muslim Empire which extended far to the north-west. It established its supremacy over all Eastern Europe until it reached the borders of Vienna. On the other side, it took upon itself, the responsibility of leadership and security of the entire Islamic world, including Northern Africa. It also revived the Caliphate, and in this way the lost splendour and grandeur of the Islamic world was once again restored. The important point to note here is that this task was performed by the Turks and not by the Arabs.

Strange are the ways of Providence! The consolidation of the Usmanian Caliphate produced a Muslim renaissance in the heart of Islamic world, but at the same time the deluge of the European colonialism began, and it was soon to become the second and extremely long period of Divine chastisement of the Muslim Ummah. It eventually conquered the right and left wings of the Islamic world.

It is unquestionably true that the enlightenment of Europe after the dark ages was the result of Islamic progress. The Muslims introduced oriental and occidental arts and sciences to Europe. But when Europe awakened, and its power accumulated, it inflicted a disaster upon the Muslims. They held both the Eastern and Western extremes of Europe. In Eastern Europe, after the period of the first chastisement had ended, process of renaissance

had begun. The great Usmanian Empire served as a security guard over the central part of the Islamic territory. But in the West, the Kingdom of Spain was presenting the picture of a dying nation. According to an Urdu poetic line 'Feebleness is a crime which brings the punishment of death'[4]. Feeble Spain proved the first prey of European colonialism, and in the fifteenth century this magnificent empire was brought to a sudden and complete end. In 1492 A.D., after the downfall of Granada, similar conditions prevailed in Spain which are described in the Qur'anic verses in connection with previous nations which had been the target of Divine retribution. What had been once the lands of Muslims became 'as though they had not dwelt there' (Al-Qur'an 11:68). And presented the scene of *'nothing was to be seen but the (ruins) of their houses'* (Al-Qur'an 46:25).

In 1498 Vasco de Gama discovered a new sea route to India. Soon after this the falcon of European colonialism swooped down upon the Eastern sectors of the Islamic world, and soon Indonesia, Malaysia and India were gripped in the tyrannical clutches of European nations. This process of colonization which started in the sixteenth century reached its zenith in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries.

During this period the Usmanian Caliphate had also passed its peak and had become the 'sick man' of Europe. In other words, eight centuries after the fall of the Abbasid Caliphate the same power vacuum appeared once again in the heart of the Islamic world. Due to Muslims' weakness the tide of Western colonialism headed towards it, and the time for the fulfilment of the second threat of retribution had come.

This second phase of retribution inflicted by Allah (SWT) on the Muslim Ummah commenced at the beginning of the twentieth century. The sovereignty of the

Usmanian Caliphate after the World War I, was curtailed within the limits of Asia Minor. The entire Arab world including North Africa, after being fragmented into small nation states, came directly under the sway of European nations or was indirectly governed by them. Thus the condition prevailed which the Prophet Muhammad (SAW) had predicted in these words:

يُوشِكُ الْاُمَمُ اَنْ تَدَاعٰى عَلَيكُم كَمَا تَدَاعَى الْاَكَلَةُ اِلٰى قَصْعَتِهَا

(رواہ ابوداؤد۔عن ثوبان ﷜)

"There will come a time in which the nations of the world will invite one another to invade you in the same manner in which a person who arranges a feast calls upon his guests to partake of the victuals".

In this way the second period of Allah's retribution upon the Muslim Ummah was completed. In the first quarter of the present century almost all Islamic territories were in the unholy grip of Western colonialism. In 1967, Allah (SWT), by means of one of His cursed and condemned nations, inflicted upon the Arabs a degrading and shameful defeat. This represented the completion upon them, the 'ummiyeen', of the second threat given in the Qur'an:

فَاِذَا جَآءَ وَعْدُ الْاٰخِرَةِ لِيَسُوْٓءٗا وُجُوْهَكُمْ وَلِيَدْخُلُوا الْمَسْجِدَ
كَمَا دَخَلُوْهُ اَوَّلَ مَرَّةٍ وَّلِيُتَبِّرُوْا مَا عَلَوْا تَتْبِيْرًا ○

(بنی اسرائیل ۱۷:۷)

"...So when the second of the warnings came to pass (We permitted your enemies) to disfigure your faces, and to enter your temple, as they had

entered before, and to visit with destruction all
that fell in their power" [5] (Al-Qur'an 17 : 7)

During the time of Arab trusteeship once again the sanctity of Al-Aqsa Mosque was trampled, lost and taken by the Jews. And now only Allah (SWT) knows how long it will remain in their possession.

The most regrettable aspect of this story is that Western colonialism completely smashed the unity of the Muslim Ummah. In the beginning of this century it planted such seeds of racial and regional prejudices as are still yielding bitter fruits. At first they instigated the Arabs against the Turks. As a result of this, the central region of the Islamic word was split into two portions and the essential as well as symbolic institution of Islamic unity, the Caliphate, was destroyed. Then they fragmented the Arab world to the extent that, inspite of linguistic unity, the integration and consolidation of the Arab nations is well nigh impossible.

As a direct consequence of racial and regional prejudices that existed within the Muslim Ummah, the Ummah had to suffer the severe retribution described by Almighty Allah (SWT) in the words: *'He will fragment you and make you to taste each other's violence'*(Al-Qur'an 6 : 65). They were divided into groups ad factions and warred bitterly against each other. In World War I, Arabs massacred the Turks. In 1971 the Bengali Muslims freely shed the blood of non-Bengali Muslims and their property, life and honour all were trampled upon. *'So learn a lesson, O ye who have eyes'* (Al Qur'an 59 : 2)

In our view, the disgrace of the Arabs in 1967 at the hands of the Jews, and the degradation in 1971 of an important segment of non-Arab Muslims, can be regarded as the final limit of the deterioration and degeneration of the Muslim Ummah[6]. Although Allah's warning *'If ye reverted (to your sin), We shall revert to our punishment '* (Al-

Qur'an 17 : 8) is always before us, His forgiveness may also be manifest--- *'It may be that your Lord will have mercy upon you'* (Al-Qur'an 17 : 8). We hope and pray that no other scar of dishonour would disfigure the face of the Ummah of the Prophet Muhammad (SAW). A lot depends upon the Ummah and its wish and determination to sincerely reform and revitalize itself.

A Survey of Present Revivalist Efforts

As a matter of fact, no period of degradation and degeneration in Islamic history is without attempt to reform and rejuvenate the Muslim Ummah. In every epoch and in every country, people of sublime determination were born who performed the gigantic task of reformation and reconstruction, as their times demanded. But all such efforts were made before the Twentieth century. In these efforts the real objective was not the revival of religion, but its defence and protection. The magnificent edifice of Islam had not yet been demolished. The real spirit of religion might have faded to a considerable extent, but the social and cultural system that Islam had established in the world was still intact. Islamic Sharia' (Divine code of Law) had actually been in practice in all Muslim countries. Hence the main goal of reform had been to maintain and preserve the system of Islamic beliefs and practices in their original form, so that external and foreign influences may not attenuate and distort the faith.

This is the reason why upto the time of Shah Waliullah of Delhi, the great Indian divine, (d. 1763), the endeavours of all the reformers of the Muslim Ummah remained limited to the fields of education and theology, and their goal was simply clarification and rectification of religious doctrines and beliefs. If they stepped forward beyond this boundary, it was at the most for the purposes

of edification of character and conduct, purification of the soul and spiritual training. Before the Nineteenth century the efforts of none of the reformers of Islam assumed the shape of a political or armed movement.[7]

This is why some people regard the work of previous reformers as partial, and they are surprised that during the fourteen centuries of the history of the Muslim Ummah, not a single radical and full-fledged reformer ('Mujaddid Kamil') was born. It is clear, however, that though the building was crumbling it had not yet been demolished completely, and hence an altogether new structure was not required. Only partial restoration was needed.

As has been explained in detail, the crumbling mansion of the Islamic Ummah tumbled down in the beginning of Twentieth century, and Islam and Muslim Ummah both reached the lowest ebb of deterioration in Muslim history. Though there are now hundreds of millions of Muslims, in the word of the Prophet Muhammad (SAW), they are like jetsam on the surface of flood-water with no value or substance. Our practice of Islam and fidelity and adherence to Qur'an has reached the state predicted by the Holy Prophet (SAW) in the following Hadith:

يُوشِكُ اَنْ يَّأْتِى عَلَى زَمَانٌ لَا يَبْقٰى مِنَ الْاِسْلَامِ اِلَّا اسْمُه

وَلَا يَبْقٰى مِنَ الْقُرْاٰنِ اِلَّا رَسْمُهٗ (رواه البیهقی فی شعب الایمان)

"There will come a time, when nothing will remain in Islam except its name, and nothing will remain of reverence to the Qur'an except its style of writing".

Therefore, according to the law of Providence, when our condition became so degraded, radical attempts to revive Islam were initiated.

Some basic facts should be kept in mind in connection with this process of revival. Firstly, it is not something simple or straightforward. It has many facets, and each is being worked upon either by individuals of high determination or organised groups. Seemingly they are separate from each other and sometimes even in conflict. In reality, however, they give strength to each other in the overall process of revival and renaissance. Secondly, the task of Islamic resurgence and the revitalisation of the Islamic Ummah will not be completed in short span of ten or twenty years, but will be accomplished gradually after overcoming many difficulties and obstacles as is mentioned in the Qur'an:

لَتَرْكَبُنَّ طَبَقًا عَنْ طَبَقٍ (الانشقاق ٨٤:١٩)

"Ye shall surely travel from stage to stage"

(Al-Qur'an 84 : 19)

Every stage of this revolutionary process has its own importance. When one looks back at the efforts undertaken at earlier stages, they might appear trivial or even to some extent misguided, yet their value for their own time cannot be denied in principle. Thirdly, in this all-encompassing struggle for revival, many individuals play an important role, but ultimately they are less effective then the organised groups. These organisations and groups too lose their unique significance in the wider spectrum of Islamic movements, and finally the particularities of all movements are lost in the all-encompassing surge of the process of revival. These facts have often not been respected in the past, and consequently many individuals have aspired to become the 'Promised Mahdi' or the 'Perfect Renewer' of the faith. In the wake of these claims a variety of heresies have appeared and because of them a good many positively constructive efforts have been doomed.

The first phase of the task of Muslim nations in the process of renaissance has been to extricate themselves from the direct control of Western colonial powers. By the grace of Allah (SWT) this has nearly been achieved during the last thirty or forty years. But we are still under ideological, intellectual and cultural bondage of the West. Due to the scientific and technological superiority and dominance of Western nations, we still depend upon them in many respects. Yet we thank Allah (SWT) that, except for Palestine, Kashmir, Eriteria and Muslim Central Asian region, no area of the globe containing a Muslim majority is under their direct supremacy and control[8].

According to strict Islamic spirit and principles, the term 'Muslim nation' is a self-contradiction. The Qur'an and Hadith state clearly that all Muslims from any part of the world form one Ummah or Hizb, community or party, not various geographical entities or nations. They are unified in an indivisible religious communion with no possibility of internal divisiveness or of multiplicity of identity. Hence the term 'Nation' in the Western political sense should not be applied to them. But historically Muslims had long ago ceased to function as an Ummah or unified community, and hence *de facto* assumed national status. Yet the conception of a religious unicity still existed until the beginning of this century when the ruthlessness of Western colonialism brought the Usmanian Caliphate to an end. Today there is no Muslim Ummah united in one whole, only numerous Muslim states inhabiting their own territories.

Seen from a rather too idealistic point of view, the political autonomy of Muslims is in no way equivalent to a renaissance and revival of the Islamic faith. But no one can pass the verdict about the future of this autonomy. It may be a means to religious resurgence. Or may be, Allah

(SWT) bestows the favour of upholding the banner of His religion to an entirely new people, as the Qur'an says:

يَسْتَبْدِلْ قَوْمًا غَيْرَكُمْ (محمد ٤٧:٣٨)

"He might substitute for you another people".

(Al-Qur'an 47 : 38)

But under the present circumstances the hopes of Islam are associated with the existing Muslim Ummah, and in fact these hopes and the existing Ummah are inseparable from each other.

Under these circumstances, the attainment of the blessing of political freedom by Muslim nations is surely connected with the process of Islamic renaissance. And the movements which have been instrumental in gaining this autonomy must be considered to have contributed to this renaissance. As for the criticism that the leaders of most of these movements were not ideal and practicing Muslims, perhaps the following Prophetic saying explains this:

إِنَّ اللّٰهَ يُؤَيِّدُ الدِّينَ بِالرَّجُلِ الْفَاجِرِ (بخاری: کتاب الجهاد)

"Verily, it happens that Allah strengthens His faith by means of a wicked person".

(Bukhari: Kitab al-Jehad)

Allah's providence is surely amazing. His planning is precise, perfect and mysterious. His design are subtle and unhurried and often His faith is served even by the vile and sinful:

وَاللّٰهُ غَالِبٌ عَلٰٓى اَمْرِهٖ وَلٰكِنَّ اَكْثَرَ النَّاسِ لَا يَعْلَمُوْنَ ۝

(يوسف ١٢:٢١)

"And Allah hath full power to fulfil His commands but most men know it not"

(Al-Qur'an 12 : 21)

In this connection another truth that we should realise is that the regional or racial prejudices which were invoked for strengthening the freedom campaigns in Muslim countries had as such no relation with the faith of Islam, and in fact contradicted a fundamental principle of the faith as mentioned above. But there was no other alternative, because the hearts and intellects of Muslims did not have an attachment to Islam strong enough to suffice as a foundation for a dynamic collective effort. Surely the human stamina and effective resistance power which are required for achieving steadfastness in a cause can only be maintained on the basis of concrete grounds, not upon mere idealism and sentimentalism. Had the sentiments of Turkish nationalism not been aroused immediately after World War I, the name of Turkey would not have remained on the world map. Similarly, it is common knowledge that Arabs do not have a sincere and tangible attachment to Islam at present, and therefore Arab nationalism has been the only available foundation for the struggle of Arab deliverance from the clutches of European domination. And there is in fact no harm in adopting it as temporary expedient defensive strategy, provided that it is not accepted as a permanent base for Muslim ideology. After the achievement of the transitional objective of political autonomy, true Islamic beliefs including the principle of the unity and brotherhood of Islamic Ummah should be stressed firmly.

Against this background, the creation of Pakistan in 1947 stands out as the most unique effort and its fruition. If the Muslims of the Indo-Pakistan subcontinent had co-operated with non-Muslims on the basis of Indian nationalism for achieving independence from the British,

they would have done so with justification. It was a special blessing and mercy of Allah (SWT) that, owing to the prevailing conditions of the time, the Indian Muslims launched their political struggle on the basis of Muslim nationalism. Consequently it gave birth to a state ideologically based entirely upon Islam. Just as Salman of Persia (RAA) had renounced all secular identity and called himself Salman bin Islam. Pakistan too was an offspring born of Islam. Pakistan in its very constitution and genesis represents an advance upon all other Muslim countries. And as compared to these nations, Pakistan has already in principle transcended the limitations of regional and ethnic nationalism.

The most important negative factor that caused Muslims of India to define themselves in religious terms was the traditional prejudice, insularity and narrow-mindedness of the Hindus and their ambition for revenge against the Muslim domination of India that had endured for a thousand years. The passion for setting old scores was burning in their hearts. In this way, their hatred for Islam became a potent factor contributing towards the Islamic reawakening and realisation of Muslims as a separate entity.

The strongest positive factor in the Pakistan movement was the religious fervour and dedication in the hearts of the Muslims of India, which was far stronger than other Muslims in the world. The greatest proof of its force was the violent reaction exhibited in India on the abolition of the Caliphate. In no other country was it displayed even on a much smaller scale with such emotion and sincerity. There was also a time when the 'Khilafat' movement became the motto of joint political struggle of Muslims and Hindus of the sub-continent. The second positive factor in this connection was the emergence of the great poet-philosopher, Muhammad Iqbal, whose

extremely moving and heart-rending epic poetry awakened the caravan of Indian Muslims from their deep slumber and apathy, and filled their hearts with religious enthusiasm. In fact, the whole Muslim Ummah is deeply indebted to Iqbal for this contribution. His poetry, in its dedication to the Muslim Ummah, has played a vital role in the multi-sided struggle for the revival of Islam and its renaissance.

It was very significant in this context that, in 1974, the Summit Conference of the Heads of Muslim States from all over the world was held in Lahore. It was the city in, which passed the 'Pakistan Resolution' in 1940 that, turned out to be a landmark in the struggle of Indian Muslims for a separate homeland. And in this very city lies buried Iqbal, the greatest poet of deep Islamic sentiment and spiritual guide of the Muslim Ummah in the present age.

The second important aspect or phase of the all-round revivalist activity comprises of efforts of different groups and organisations of religious divines and scholars of Islam actively engaged each in its own special way to serve the cause of Islam and the Muslim Ummah. In this respect also the Indo-Pakistan sub-continent occupies a distinctive place in the whole of Islamic world. The hold that the religious divines of this sub-continent exercise on the Muslim masses is stronger than can be found in any other part of the Muslim world. No where else is Islam so firmly rooted among them as here[9]. Indeed it would not be far from true to say that even the Arabian peninsula, despite the deep impression until the middle of twentieth century created by the reformist efforts of Muhammad bin Abdul Wahhab, is far behind Pakistan in this regard.

The reason behind this superiority can be easily understood after a little thought. No genius like the versatile Imamul-Hind Shah Waliullah was born during the last three hundred years in the whole Islamic World.

While diverting the minds of Muslims towards Qur'an and Hadith, the real sources of Islamic disciplines, he also performed splendidly the task of reconstructing Islamic thought anew. Through his efforts, the respect and reverence for religion and religious divines was greatly renewed and enhanced.

In this connection another fact that should be clearly understood is that the main emphasis and stress in the efforts of religious divines in the modern age has been the safeguarding and defence of religious dogmas and rituals rather than the revival of true faith and a total Islamic way of life. In this way their services outwardly continue with the efforts of previous reformers and revivalists of Islam, though in reality there are some differences too. For example, since the time when 'Ijtehad' ceased to be exercised, age of static dogmatism set in bringing with it sectarianism and divisiveness. The religious divines of every sect are now using all their energy to propagate their special form of dogma and ritual, seeking the approval and support of their own particular group or sect. This strengthens the roots of sectarian factionalism and mutual intolerance. Moreover, they have not studied modern sciences, social theories and philosophical thoughts of the contemporary age, as Imam Ghazali and Imam ibn Taimiyyah did in their own times. Hence most of the present Muslim divines are not competent to fulfil the real demands of defending, protecting and promoting the cause of their religion on fruitful lines.

The very idea can be alternatively expressed. Majority of the Muslim religious divines and missionaries of the present age cannot serve as an engine capable of propelling forward and steering the ship of Islam to the envisaged destination of revival and regeneration. In Indo-Pakistan subcontinent, however, they at least serve as a heavy anchor that can stop this ship from drifting away in

wrong directions. And in this age this is also quite a substantial and laudable service.

In the subcontinent, the 'Deoband' school of thought and its proponents occupy a distinctive position in revivalist efforts. Though not strictly a descendant of Shah Waliullah's school of thought, it certainly appropriated a big chunk of the knowledge and wisdom of that rich system. Besides, it has brought forth a vast chain of religious schools and seminaries, and has also inspired a great movement that has established the roots of orthodox Islam among the masses and focussed attention on basic beliefs and realities of faith. Under its influence, at least, those people are coming closer to religion whose minds are untouched by the theoretical and philosophical questions imposed by Western influence, and in whose hearts a sentiment for moral virtue and religious sensibility are dormant, even though perhaps not fully realised. This movement is the Tableeghi Jamaat, the religious impulse of which has spread throughout the Islamic world and penetrating into non-Islamic lands as well. It has actively been renewing the faith of a great many ordinary Muslims and it undoubtedly holds an important position in the general process of Islamic revival.

The third and the most important aspect of the revivalist process concerns the role of the organisations and societies that have established for the sole purpose of Islamic resurgence. Such groups have been working under different names in many Muslim countries, but their efforts and aims are essentially identical and they form variegated aspects of a single movement. Among these parties the 'Al-Ikhwan al-Muslimun' which originated in Egypt had become the centre of attention and religious aspirations for many because of the intense fervour and the wide range of its influence. But even in the aspect of

the all-round process of revival, the Indo-Pakistan subcontinent excels other Muslim areas.

The late Maulana Abul Kalam Azad was the first person to summon people towards the movement of reviving the spirit of Islam, and so deserves to be called the founder of this movement in the Indo-Pakistan subcontinent. In the earlier part of this century he sounded in the pages of his magazines 'Al-Balagh' and 'Al-Hilal' a clarion call for the establishment of Divine sovereignty and the formation of 'Hizbullah', the party of Allah (SWT), for this purpose. His distinguished style of writing and oratory, especially during the course of 'Khilafat Movement' made him popular throughout the subcontinent. His impassioned call and charismatic personality conquered the hearts of millions of Muslims. But soon after, for reasons known only to Allah (SWT), he left this great mission and joined the Indian national congress. For the rest of his life he dedicated himself to the politics of Indian nationalism with utmost sincerity and perseverance.

Of the many reasons for this spectacular change in the life of Maulana Azad, one crucial factor might be his extraordinary intelligence. He was admittedly a genius, and geniuses are usually not men of action. Incidentally, some trace of this is found in one of his sayings:' We have committed the crime of wearing the cloak of piety and the blanket of vagrancy at the same time'. Also, neither he was formally qualified from any well-established religious seminary, nor was he acknowledged as a religious scholar. Hence, the scholars were not ready to accept him as a leader or heed his advice. At that time the religious divines had a firm grip on the Muslims of India, so he found all doors closed to him to lead the Indian Muslims in efforts to bring about an Islamic revolution. Professor Yusuf Saleem Chishti confirmed this in his anecdote about Maulana

Azad. After performing the preliminary work of Qur'anic dissemination laboriously and with utmost zeal for about ten years, he planned to take a step further in co-operation with late Mufti Kifayatullah and late Maulana Ahmed Saeed, in 1922, at a conference of Jamiat Ulema-e-Hind held in Delhi. Maulana Azad addressed first and through his excellent oratory was able to rouse and motivate the audience to action. Then, Maulana Ahmed Saeed spoke and said, "After the death of Shaikh-ul-Hind, the chair of the leadership of the Indian Muslims has remained unoccupied. Presently, we have a greater need of an Imam-ul-Hind than a Shaikh-ul-Hind[10]. Now think over and find out the most suitable person for that chair, and become his disciples to launch the struggle for Islamic revival afresh". But Allah (SWT) had not decreed this to be so. Moinuddin Ajmeri, a great and renowned scholar, got up and directly addressed Abul Kalam Azad by saying "Judge yourself candidly how much are you really worth". From these opening words, it is obvious, what would have been the tone of the rest of the speech. Disappointed and dismayed, Maulana Azad withdrew himself from his religious mission and soon after he joined Indian National Congress.

Even long after Maulana Azad left the field, the echo of his clarion call continued to resound vibrantly in Muslim India. And within ten years a courageous young man named Syed Abul A'la Mawdudi founded the Jamaat-e-Islami. He regarded Abul Kalam Azad as 'dead' because he has forsaken his mission. Maulana Mawdudi then recreated this mission with great determination and brought out a monthly journal similar in name to Azad's exegesis of the Holy Qur'an, 'Tarjuman-ul-Qur'an'. Through this journal, he presented to the Indian Muslims a plan of action to achieve the same ideals of the sovereignty of Divine Law and regeneration of the faith.

Maulana Mawdudi had less enthusiasm than Abul Kalam Azad. He was intelligent, but not a genius. Yet he was comparatively more diligent and industrious. For the first six or seven years he continued to work individually with great patience and perseverance. For some time he also worked in an institution called 'Darul Islam' and finally laid the foundation of Jamaat-e-Islami in 1941 and thus started a well-organised effort. Before the establishment of the Jamaat he criticised severely the stand of those religious divines who were in the Indian National Congress or were supporters of it, and he by his forceful arguments showed that their association with the Congress would extremely jeopardise the interests of both Muslims and Islam in India. Then he also criticised the nationalistic politics of Indian Muslims with strong arguments, and proved that their policy was contrary to Islamic ideological principles. His own Jamaat-e-Islami was founded on the highest idealistic level of true Islamic principles. The manifesto of the Jamaat-e-Islami consisted of the following:

1. Islam is not a religion in a limited sense; it is a complete code of life or 'deen', a perfect ideology. By its very nature it demands total application on all spheres of life.

2. 'Ibadat' or worship in Islam is not merely the performance of rituals and canonical prayers, but total obedience to Allah's commands.

3. Muslims cannot be considered merely as a nationalistic group. They constitute a Muslim Ummah, 'the people of Allah'. The bond that unites them is their faith. Their foremost aim should be to bring about a change in the whole world according to their faith and to put the Islamic system of life into practice.

4. The Majority of non-Muslims of the present world are legally non-Muslims. Actually they are not to be

considered non-Muslims as they have not been invited to Islam and hence the question of acceptance or rejection does not arise.

5. The majority of Muslims in the world are Muslim only legally and through parentage, not by genuine faith. The fundamental religious beliefs of Islam are not at all deeply entrenched in their minds and hearts, nor do their actions show abiding faith in the Islamic code of law.

6. The fostering of the national interests of Muslims, the protection of their political rights and the struggle for their political independence have little to do with the genuine revival of the faith and an Islamic renaissance.

7. The real task before the Muslims is two-fold: first they must summon mankind to the worship of Allah (SWT) and total obedience to Him, without any distinction of caste, colour or creed and to invite them to accept the ideological principles of Islam. Secondly, the energies of those upon whom Allah (SWT) bestows the courage to embrace Islam with full commitment, must then be consolidated and pooled in a well-organised group to struggle systematically for the 'establishment of the sovereignty of Allah's command and the 'supremacy of the Islamic way of life'[11].

8. In this struggle an educational and ideological revolution occupies the primary place. After this a practical and moral reform should be instituted, along with social improvements. Lastly, a change of governmental structure should be established.

We take this position to be tinged with extreme radicalism and idealism but at the same time we consider it ideologically and basically correct. Together with other revivalist efforts, the rise of such an ideologically 'pure' movement was the need of the time. We must praise

Maulana Mawdudi that he and his associates remained firm on this stand continuously for six years in spite of sarcasm, ridicule and tough opposition meted out to them by all. This movement offered fine and perhaps rare examples of dedication and it formed a brilliant chapter in the history of devotion to the Islamic cause. In this way, the true task of the revival of Islam, the task which had been blue-printed by Maulana Azad, was in fact initiated in earnest and for some time carried on by Maulana Mawdudi.

But most unfortunately, Maulana Mawdudi and his Jamaat-e-Islami did not remain firm on this programme. In 1947 the national movement of Indian Muslims met with success and an independent homeland for them, called Pakistan, came into being. It was thought now that in this new state a political movement in the name of Islam could be started for achieving the envisaged goals. Maulana Mawdudi thus abandoned his fundamentalist position regarding the slow-paced and step-by-step methodology of Islamisation, although no ideological revolution or tangible moral change had occurred in the society. The Jamaat plunged actively into the field of politics, hoping to guide and reform the Pakistani government along Islamic lines and capture political power itself. On the contrary, with the passage of time, their expectations were hopelessly disappointed, and gradually the whole movement bogged down in dirty politics, failing to heed the Qur'anic warning:

وَلٰكِنَّهٗٓ اَخْلَدَ اِلَى الْاَرْضِ (الاعراف ٧:١٧٦)

But he clung to the earth (Al-Qur'an 7 : 176)

The Jamaat-e-Islami was also forced to compromise on principles and sometimes altogether sacrifice its pure Islamic ideals for political expediency. At first the Jamaat assumed that a truly pious government could be

established just by raising the slogan of Islam and by dint of their own prowess. When other political parties offered co-operation, it was turned down with great indifference and disdain. But the result of the Punjab election of 1951 shattered this self-confidence. After that it was thought that the Jamaat could overcome the obstacles before it through alliance with other religious groups. But soon this also proved impractical and unfruitful. When, even after all its compromises, the religious ideals upheld so far by the Jamaat proved too demanding to win wide-spread public support, it descended to a still lower level of political action, and a struggle was launched to go forward in the name of democracy and for this joined hands with avowedly secular political parties. During General Ayub Khan's regime that lasted eleven years, the Jamaat thoroughly dedicated itself to the 'worthy' task of restoration of democracy. But after the downfall of Ayub Khan, the later government proved astonishingly even more corrupt and undemocratic than the old one.

At present we do not intend to write a historical essay, or to predict the future of Jamaat-e-Islami. The most important aspect of this matter in which we are interested here is that due to the persistent deviation in the objectives and methodology of the Jamaat-e-Islami, there remained in the Indo-Pakistan subcontinent no vanguard for a purely Islamic revival. Till the present time, no effort has been made to fulfil this vital role which had been envisioned by Abul Kalam Azad and his 'Hizbullah' and taken up for a time by Maulana Mawdudi's own Jamaat-e-Islami, which is now moribund. The process of revival is still going ahead slowly on a political and national basis, and the activities of Muslim scholars and divines have increased in their own particular sphere. But a purely religiously motivated and radically active movement for the transformation of society no longer exists.

This change in the basic principles and methodology of the Jamaat-e-Islami was brought about in 1947 when Pakistan came into existence as a separate homeland for the Muslims of the subcontinent. For about ten years Jamaat continued to forge ahead on the basis of its own momentum, and many of its sincere supporters were not even aware of this shift in Jamaat's ideals and policy. But by 1957 this discrepancy gradually became painfully apparent and a severe protest developed over the party's program. Consequently, the majority of the senior members as well as some of the rank and file left the Jamaat. Among the junior members who resigned from the Jamaat was also the writer of these lines. The outgoing senior members then devoted themselves to their own private projects, but the present author could not erase the fond memory of the 'paradise lost' engendered upon his mind under the impress of the Jamaat-e-Islami.

He was only twenty-five when he left the Jamaat. He was not a scholar, nor did he have much experience. So he passed ten long years in suspense, hoping that someone from among the former senior members would come forward to initiate the movement anew. But perhaps Allâh (SWT) had not willed it so. In 1966-67 he gathered up his energy and determination, and decided to devote himself to the Qur'an, in remembrance of the Qur'anic verse,

إِنَّ هٰذَا الْقُرْاٰنَ يَهْدِىْ لِلَّتِىْ هِىَ اَقْوَمُ (بنی اسرائیل ۱۷:۹)

"Verily, this Qur'an guideth unto that which is straightest" (Al-Qur'an 17 : 9)[12]

And so the present author started on his own work of Islamic 'dawah', inviting people to Islam by educating them in, and calling to, the Qur'an. Allah (SWT) accepted this humble service and, starting from small study circles of Qur'an, in a matter of few years in 1972 the Markazi Anjuman Khuddam-ul-Qur'an (Central Society of the

Servants of Qur'an) was constituted in Lahore, Pakistan. Two years later, he announced the formation of 'Tanzeem-e-Islami' for the revival of Islam in its pristine purity.

He is fully aware of the fact that he does not possess the genius or talents of Abul Kalam Azad, nor the capacity and industry of Maulana Mawdudi. He is neither a brilliant orator nor a uniquely skilled writer. But, thanks to Almighty Allah, he remained fully conscious of his duty throughout, and this awareness constantly keeps him restless. The sense of the trust he bears to Allah (SWT) has compelled him to take a plunge into the arduous task of calling people to Allah (SWT).

Those who are bereft of the courage and ability to think above their sectarian prejudices and limited personal idiosyncrasies are surely not capable of responding to this call. But those who can dedicate themselves to a cause after considering and approving its fundamental ideals and objectives should consider our message seriously. It is incumbent upon them to judge our standpoint and efforts candidly and with an open mind. And if they find it based on truth and sincerity, co-operate with us wholeheartedly and with full determination, in any case, we, in our humble way, have taken a leap and are determined to march forward in our mission:

بِسْمِ اللّٰهِ مَجْرٖهَا وَ مُرْسٰهَا ط (هود ١١:٤١)

"IN THE NAME OF ALLAH BE THE COURSE AND THE MOORING" (Al-Qur'an 11 : 41)

(Prayer of Noah (AS) as he launched the ark, and of pilgrims as they set out for Makkah)

END NOTES:-

1. Siddiqui, Mazheruddin: The Qur'anic Concept of History, Karachi, 1945.

2. Of these two, the Umayyad era marked the real glory, power and supremacy of the purely Arab race. From the beginning of the reign of the Abbasid dynasty the Persians had decisively gained an upper hand in the affairs of the kingdom and its government. The influence of the Persians in the Muslim world corroded from within the glory and power of the Arabs. The fervour, dynamism and aggressiveness which were inherent in the Arab blood manifested itself in that branch of Umayyad dynasty which established itself in Spain and continued to flourish for three centuries after the total collapse of Arab power in the heart of the Islamic world. And it ended during the last years of the fifteenth century.

3. During this very period Afghan tribes advanced southeast and invaded the Indian sub-continent. These invasions paved the way to the magnificent Muslim rule in India stretching over centuries.

4. ہے جرمِ ضعیفی کی سزا مرگِ مفاجات

5. It is a strange historical fact that out of two 'Qiblas' on this earth, the blow of defilement and destruction was dealt on all four occasions to the Al-Aqsa Mosque which is wrongly called the first Qibla. It should be clearly understood that the first Qibla is the Ka'bah, the 'house of Allah' as the Qur'an asserts, *'Verily the first sanctuary appointed for mankind was that of Bakka'* (3:96). The special favour Allah (SWT) has bestowed over it is evident from the 'Incident of the Elephant'. Through God's providence the political centre of Islam was gradually transferred farther and farther from the first Qibla, so that whenever this Ummah would have to face divine retribution, the sanctity of the Ka'bah would not be violated. This was why as early as the rule of the

caliph Ali (may Allah be pleased with him) the political capital of the Islamic world was transferred from Madina to Kufa. From there it shifted to Demascus and then to Baghdad, and finally to Constantinople in the extreme North. In this way, the Ka'bah - the House of Allah - always remained safe from the invasions of the enemies of Islam. But its true that its sanctity was to some extent violated once or twice by those who were nominally Muslims.

[6]. The degeneration and deterioration of the Ummah continues in the wake of recent events of Bosnia, Chechenya, Kosova, Gulf War, Palestine, Kashmir, Indian Gujurat, East Timor, annihilation of Taliban and Afghanistan and the pending attack on Iraq. (November 2002)

[7]. One reason for this was that the Holy Prophet (SAW) had issued severe restraints regarding armed rebellion against Muslim rulers. As long as Islamic Sharia was being upheld by them and no apparent infidelity was being committed, no armed opposition was possible in spite of their personal sinful actions or due to their oppression or tyranny.

This is why when these conditions changed and the government was snatched from the Muslims and non-Muslim nations became their rulers, Islamic revivalist efforts became militant. A glorious example of this is furnished by Shah Waliullah and his family under whose auspices the 'Movement of the Martyrs' was initiated in India.

[8]. As of now (2002) with the exception of Kashmir and Palestine, all Muslim states have gained independence.

[9]. The agitation against Dr. Fazalur Rahman's book 'Islam' in 1969 and the more recent miracle which occurred in connection with the Qadiyani problem are outstanding proofs of this statement.

[10]. The word 'Shaikh' traditionally referred to a person with deep spirituality and extensive knowledge of religious matters. Whereas the word 'Imam' is broader in connotation in as much as it connotes a person with qualities of political and social leadership as well as accomplishment in purely religious disciplines.

[11]. It is noteworthy here that, after the establishment of the Jamaat-e-Islami, Maulana Ameen Ahsan Islahi joined the movement and contributed his distinctive Qur'anic thought. Then the term 'sovereignty of Allah's command' (Hakoomat-e-Ilahiya) was altogether dropped and instead the purely Qur'anic terminology of 'establishment of Deen' (Iqamat-e-Deen) and 'testifying to the truth' (Shahadat-e-Haqq) began to be used in Jamaat's literature.

[12]. It is interesting to note that this verse of the Holy in Surah Bani Israel comes just after those verses which delineated the resemblance between the Jewish people and the Muslim Ummah, which have been discussed in this track. The outline of Jewish history began with a reminder to them of their own sacred Book, the Torah: 'We gave the scripture to Moses (AS) and We appointed it a guidance for the children of Israel' (17 : 2). This section ends by referring to the Qur'an. As Jewish community had been established on the basis of a Book of Revelation, after their condemnation the new community (Ummah), that of the Prophet Muhammad (SAW) was established on the basis of another scripture, the Qur'an. The renewal of this Ummah must therefore be based upon the Qur'an, getting back to its message and living by its teachings.

End.

Dr. Israr Ahmad was born in 1932 in Hisar (India), graduated from King Edward Medical College (Lahore) in 1952 and received his Masters in Islamic Studies from The University of Karachi in 1965. He actively participated in the Independence Movement and was deeply affected by the thoughts of Maulana Mahmood Hassan, Allama Muhammad Iqbal, Maulana Abul Kalam Azad and Maulana Abul Ala Mawdudi. He gave up his medical practice in 1971 in order to devote the best of his time and abilities in service of Islam and its revival. As a result of his efforts, The Markazi Anjuman Khudam-ul-Qur'an Lahore was established in 1972, Tanzeem-e-Islami was founded in 1975, and Tehreek-e-Khilafat Pakistan was launched in 1991.

The Sole Aim Before

The Markazi Anjuman Khuddam-ul-Qur'an Lahore

Is to Disseminate and Propagate the Knowledge and Wisdom of

The Holy Qur'an

(The Foundation-Head of Faith and Enlightenment)

On a Vast Scale and at the Highest Intellectual Level
So as to Achieve

The Revitalization of Faith

Among the Muslims in General and Their Intelligentsia in Particular
With the Ultimate Objective of Bringing About an

Islamic Renaissance

And Ushering in, for the Second Time in History, the Blessed Era
in Which the True Islamic Way of Life Reigned Supreme

وَمَا النَّصْرُ اِلَّا مِنْ عِنْدِ اللّٰه